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YOUTH VICTIMS PROJECT
FINAL PROJECT REPORT

September 21, 1990

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	1
II. The History of the Youth Victims Project	1
III. Description of the Youth Victims Project	2
IV. Analysis of Project Objectives	4
V. Survey Results	17
VI. Recommendations	18
Appendix A	20
Appendix B	26
Appendix C	29

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Youth Victims Project is a collaborative effort between Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg, the Child and Family Support Branch of the Department of Family Services, the Youth Division of the Winnipeg City Police Department, the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and the Child Guidance Clinic. The main purpose of the project is to protect young vulnerable females from sexual abuse and exploitation by identified groups of male offenders.

The project was initiated in May 1989 as a one year pilot project with the understanding that an evaluation of the effectiveness of the project would be undertaken. The following paper represents the final report of the project, and includes recommendations to respond to the issues identified by the project.

II. THE HISTORY OF THE YOUTH VICTIMS PROJECT

In the summer of 1987 information became known to the Winnipeg Police Vice and Youth Divisions, Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg Night Duty, Hugh John MacDonald School and Seven Oaks Centre regarding the sexual exploitation of young females by organized gangs of Asian males. Through the end of 1987 and into the spring of 1988, a Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg night duty worker and the police were involved in attending meetings and speaking engagements, particularly with schools, to share information and plan ways to deal with this rising problem. It became apparent that the coordinated efforts of all those involved with these children were required in order to ensure the protection of the girls.

On February 7, 1988 the Youth Division prepared a paper entitled "Sexual Exploitation of Young Females by Asian Males", which described the problem. The report made the following observations:

- that individuals looking for solutions had contacted the police and been referred to child and family services;
- that the greatest problem was in the core area of the city, but was extending to include girls from suburban communities;
- that the contacts between the girls and men were made in video arcades and Eaton Place Mall;
- that the activities of greatest concern were behavioral problems on the part of the girls, sexual activity with pre and post-pubescent females and young adult females which has resulted in some pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and the supply of alcohol and drugs to the girls;
- that the girls were invited to the residences where they were supplied with food and clothing and were encouraged to

stay for extended periods, often being concealed when police, parents, or child care workers came looking for them; and
 - that the girls were actively seeking the company of the males.

The police report noted that the officers were faced with difficulty obtaining the hard facts and the required testimony from the children that is necessary for pursuing criminal charges because of the inability of resources to hold on to youth. The report further noted:

"Investigating officers have concluded that the only reasonable way to secure the safety of these children is to remove them to a secure setting where they can be isolated from contact with these males and where they can receive the necessary counselling. Other methods of discouraging the association have been tried and found not to work."

In December 1987, following consultation with legal counsel for Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg, the night duty worker and the investigating officers developed a proposal for dealing with the problem under the provisions of the Child and Family Services Act. The proposal recommended cooperation between Winnipeg City Police and Child and Family Services to protect and treat the girls involved with the Asian males, with the intent of providing counselling as well as securing disclosures to proceed with court action.

On April 25, 1989 the Executive Director of Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg presented a proposal to the Director of Child and Family Support for the "Juvenile Victims Project", though the title was subsequently changed to "Youth Victims Project." This document became the accepted description of the project, which officially began in May 1989.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE YOUTH VICTIMS PROJECT

A. MODEL OF INTERVENTION

The objectives of the Youth Victims Project are:

1. to determine the extent and nature of the victimization of children by groups of Southeast Asian males;
2. to develop a profile of the children being victimized;
3. to identify the factors which contribute to children being vulnerable to this type of victimization;
4. to establish a network system for a free flowing exchange of information between Child and Family Services, Police, Education, Immigration, and Health;
5. to develop and coordinate protection and treatment services for child victims and their families;
6. to identify and address risk factors for project line staff;
7. to identify service needs and gaps and make recommendations for the development of alternatives for the victims;

8. to develop a profile of offenders identified during the project;
9. to identify any trends or issues which arose during the pilot project;
10. to determine if the model of intervention used in the Youth Victims Project is transferable to other service providers;
11. to identify the extent of the need for community education regarding youth victimization.

In order to address these objectives, the project was designed to operate on a number of levels.

1. Project Management

An Advisory Committee of management representatives from the Child and Family Support Branch, Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg, the Youth Division of the Winnipeg City Police, Winnipeg School Division No. 1, and the Child Guidance Clinic was responsible for the management of the project. The Advisory Committee met monthly to monitor the project activities, hear progress reports from the Project Coordinator, and discuss issues relevant to the project. As the year progressed, representatives from the Immigration and Settlement Branch of the Department of Family Services, and the Children's Hospital Child Protection Centre were added to the Advisory Committee.

The Youth Victims Project began without all aspects of the project being fully defined prior to official implementation. As a result, negotiations were undertaken by the Advisory Committee over the early months of the project to define the roles and responsibilities of the key players involved.

2. Project Team

A child protection worker from Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg who was familiar with all aspects of the project, and two specially trained police officers from the Youth Division worked at the direct service level:

- a) to identify and protect girls at risk of victimization;
- b) to enforce the law with the offenders and work to dissuade them from further contact with the girls; and
- c) to meet with agencies and community-based groups to discuss the project.

The decision to use this model was based on the early experiences of the three individuals in establishing connections with the victims and the offenders. As the project progressed, two other teams of two officers from Youth Division were trained to work on the project, to ensure that police who were conversant with the issues would always be available. Rosemary Somers served as Project Coordinator, working out of her office at Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg.

3. Line Working Group

An informal group of school counsellors who had regular contact with the children through the schools met on a monthly basis to share information on names and disclosures and to update each other on their efforts. The Line Working Group was comprised of the Project Coordinator, school counsellors, Child Guidance Clinic social workers and school staff from Seven Oaks Centre.

B. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

A program analyst from the Child and Family Support Branch was assigned to conduct the evaluation of the project. The analyst attended the monthly meetings of the Advisory Committee and any other meetings that were relevant to the evaluation of the project. In addition, the analyst obtained information from the Project Coordinator related to the socio-demographic profiles of the victims and offenders, the activities of the Project Team and the Line Working Group, the nature and extent of the victimization, the protection and treatment activities available for the victims, and service trends and issues.

Survey questionnaires were distributed to those who hosted a formal presentation on the project and to those who worked with the victims in a direct service capacity, to gather comments on the service needs and issues and the perceived effectiveness of the project.

IV. ANALYSIS OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

In the following section of the report, data relating to each of the eleven objectives of the project will be presented, and observations regarding the effectiveness with which these objectives were met will be made.

OBJECTIVE #1: TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT AND NATURE OF THE VICTIMIZATION OF CHILDREN BY GROUPS OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN MALES.

Early in the project, the Project Team concentrated its efforts on identifying as many victims, offenders, and locations where exploitive activities occurred, as possible. The team made presentations and met with staff in child and family service agencies, schools, and residential care facilities. As a result of this activity, the original list of approximately 20 female victims and approximately 40 male offenders doubled. The police became aware of six to eight major locations in the city where female victims could be found. At the end of the project, the team confirmed that 183 girls were involved with the male offenders, based on information provided directly by the girls.

The information obtained by the team regarding the recruitment of the girls was also an indicator of the extent of the problem. The biggest source for recruitment was found to be girls who were

already involved with the groups who would bring other girls to the residences of the offenders. A recruitment method frequently used by the men, particularly earlier on in the project, was to ask girls in residential care facilities (in person or over the phone), if there were any new girls they could meet. It was also found that the men employed traditional "pick up" methods by approaching girls in pinball/video arcades, Central Park, sports bars, local restaurants and shopping malls, and inviting them to their residences.

The disclosures made by the girls presented a consistent pattern of the nature of the victimization, which can be broken down into three broad areas: sexual abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases. The exploitation of the girls was found to centre primarily around sexual assaults which occurred at the residences of the offenders. Alcohol and drugs (usually pills) were provided to the girls upon their arrival at the residences. The sexual assault disclosures revealed that sexual activity occurred after the girls were too impaired to resist or had passed out. The team also found that the known and traceable spread of sexually transmitted diseases (for example, gonorrhea, chlamydia and herpes) was very high among the involved child victims and offenders.

OBSERVATIONS:

The Project Team was able to track names of both victims and offenders, learn the addresses where exploitive activities occurred and obtain disclosures which revealed the nature of the problem. The team believed that factors which contributed to their ability to obtain this information included:

- a) the concentrated effort of a small number of team members who quickly became known to the victims and the offenders and vice versa; and
- b) the ability of the team members to make connections with those involved and to gain new information on a consistent basis.

OBJECTIVE #2: TO DEVELOP A PROFILE OF THE CHILDREN BEING VICTIMIZED.

During the course of the project, there were 183 girls identified by the Project Coordinator as being directly involved with the male offenders. The girls ranged in age from 10 to over 18, with the largest number (99 or 54%) being in the 13 to 16 age group (see Table 1). The next largest group (53 or 29%) were between the ages of 17 and 18. There were 20 girls between 10 and 12 years of age. The majority of the girls were either Native/Metis (96 or 52%) or Caucasian (82 or 45%).

Table 2 presents a breakdown of the group of victims by the agency that each girl was involved with at the time she was interviewed by the Project Coordinator. The majority of the girls were involved with either Child and Family Services of

Central Winnipeg (67 or 37%) or Northwest Child and Family Services (19 or 10%), while 20 girls (11%) were involved with a Native agency or regional office. Of the 183 identified victims, 52 or 28% were not known to a child and family service agency at the time they were interviewed.

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF GIRLS IDENTIFIED BY AGE AND RACE

RACIAL BACKGROUND	AGE				TOTAL
	10-12 YEARS	13-16 YEARS	17-18 YEARS	18 + YEARS	
Caucasian	6	39	29	8	82
Native/Metis	14	55	24	3	96
Oriental	-	3	-	-	3
Black	-	2	-	-	2
TOTAL	20	99	53	11	183

TABLE 2
NUMBER OF GIRLS IDENTIFIED, BY AGE AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT AT TIME
OF INTAKE

AGENCY INVOLVED	AGE				TOTAL
	10-12 YEARS	13-16 YEARS	17-18 YEARS	18 + YEARS	
Central Winnipeg	9	35	17	6	67
Northwest	1	9	9	-	19
NEWFACESS	-	6	1	-	7
Winnipeg South	-	3	4	-	7
West Winnipeg	-	2	1	-	3
Eastern Manitoba	-	7	1	-	8
Native Agency/ Regional Office	-	16	4	-	20
Not Known to Agency	10	21	16	5	52
TOTAL	20	99	53	11	183

OBSERVATIONS:

The finding regarding agency involvement was anticipated by the Project Coordinator because contacts with the girls were frequently made through Night Duty and because the problem was identified as existing primarily in the core area of the city.

It was also learned that seven girls aged 13 to 16, ten girls aged 17 to 18, and six girls aged 18 and over have either had babies or were expecting babies fathered by men from the offender gangs.

The above profile of the child victims does not include information regarding their family life situations which may have offered some insights as to what might have led them to become involved with the offenders. This information would be helpful in identifying possible alternatives to this life-style for the victims and in developing appropriate treatment strategies.

OBJECTIVE #3: TO IDENTIFY THE FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO CHILDREN BEING VULNERABLE TO THIS TYPE OF VICTIMIZATION

The Project Team found that a "familial" type of relationship developed between the girls and the men. The men provided for the girls at the basic levels: shelter, food, clothing and companionship. A profile of the reported activities, apart from the sexual exploitation, showed the girls receiving attention, fun and acceptance (e.g., there was an atmosphere of parties and excitement, the men played cards and games with the girls and provided entertainment such as video movies, television and car rides, the men cooked for the girls, there was free access to alcohol and drugs, etc.). At a very basic and non-threatening level, the girls were nurtured, fed and given a place to stay.

The victims regarded the sexual exploitation as a small price for the attention they received from the men. They also did not regard the age difference as an issue. The men did not force the girls to go to their residences, the girls would go willingly, particularly when they were on the run from their families or residential facilities.

The victims reported that they felt a sense of belonging when they were with the men and the other girls. Add to this such basic need fulfillment as food preparation, treats, group activities and a place to sleep, and this environment became a type of "quasi family" group. The knowledge that social workers and the police were working to take them out of this environment and to keep the men away from them served to further their sense of loyalty and protectiveness.

OBSERVATIONS:

The project has been effective in gaining an understanding of the vulnerability of the girls to this type of victimization. A conclusion made by the Project Team and the Advisory Committee is that the girls are vulnerable to exploitation by any individuals or groups who will meet their basic needs. If these offender groups were removed from the scene, it is reasonable to expect that another group would take their place.

OBJECTIVE #4: TO ESTABLISH A NETWORK SYSTEM FOR A FREE FLOWING EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES, POLICE, EDUCATION, IMMIGRATION, AND HEALTH

A network system for the exchange of information pertaining to the Youth Victims Project was developed on two levels: at the project management level through the Advisory Committee and at the direct service level through the efforts of the Project Team members.

Advisory Committee Information Network

The project began with the coordinated efforts of Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg, the Child and Family Support Branch, the Youth Division of the Winnipeg Police Department, the Child Guidance Clinic, and Winnipeg School Division No. 1.

Representatives from the Immigration and Settlement Services Branch were asked to sit on the Advisory Committee to gain a better understanding of the cultural issues involved and to provide a link to the ethno-cultural and immigrant communities. Staff from the Child Protection Centre were also asked to participate to share information on child abuse and exploitation issues.

Direct Service Information Network

One of the primary tasks of the Project Coordinator was to work as part of the Line Working Group to address the needs of the victims and to provide education on the problem. The Project Coordinator also worked directly with various service providers, (for example, child and family service agencies, schools, residential care facilities, foster parents groups, health department staff, police and R.C.M.P., Immigration and Settlement Services) to share information regarding youth victimization. Information was shared among workers from these agencies to consult on specific cases of victimization, to gather information on the extent and nature of the child victimization, and to discuss an appropriate system response to the problem.

OBSERVATIONS:

The development of a network for the exchange of information was an area in which the project was found to be effective. It became evident that the target group is a very difficult one to reach, not easily served, and not well understood. The involvement of the "gang" element adds a new dimension to this problem increasing the difficulties in understanding the issues. Requests for information have been extensive and difficult for one person to meet without jeopardizing other critical aspects of the project.

OBJECTIVE #5: TO DEVELOP AND COORDINATE PROTECTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES FOR CHILD VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Throughout the year, work was done with staff of collateral agencies and schools to attempt to provide protection and treatment services to child victims and parents of victims. These efforts, however, did not produce the desired results.

Only one school, which was involved with the girls for two years prior to the inception of the Youth Victims Project, was able to run support groups. Another high school with a large population of children involved with the gangs, involved the school counsellor in working with the child victims on a one-to-one basis. The other schools and collateral agencies that had hoped to run support groups were unsuccessful for a variety of reasons.

There was also an effort made to run a parents support group, in response to requests made by parents whose children were involved with the Asian gangs. Over time, however, only two families consistently attended.

OBSERVATIONS:

It was found to be very difficult to run support groups for the girls for a number of reasons. Many of the girls were not in school, or did not attend school regularly, thus making contact for treatment purposes difficult. There was also competition and jealousy between girls regarding their relationships with specific men, so the girls had no desire to be involved in a group together. The girls were found to be very emotionally needy, and they were generally confused, frightened and mistrustful. The Line Working Group concluded that it would be preferable to run support groups in conjunction with individual treatment for the girls.

The difficulty in running the parents support group seemed to be related to the need to provide additional support to the parents outside of the group. The Project Team concluded that there is a need for consistent contact with the parents, even by phone, between the group sessions.

A major impediment to providing effective treatment for the girls was that they would continue to run from child care facilities, generally back to the offenders.

OBJECTIVE #6: TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS RISK FACTORS FOR PROJECT LINE STAFF

During the course of the project it was learned, through real experiences, that line staff working in this particular area of child protection are exposed to potential risks to their safety. The following factors were found by the Project Team to contribute to the potential risks:

- the offenders appeared to not regard their activities with the girls as wrong or illegal and saw the interference of the team as harassment;
- although the offenders did not appear to fear police authority, as recent immigrants some did fear deportation if charged and convicted;
- police found evidence of criminal activities which suggested to the team that the offenders may fear intrusion into their activities and may be dangerous or retaliatory;
- evidence of a number of girls being associated with other organized gangs, as well as possible involvement in Satanic activities.

OBSERVATIONS:

The Project Team and the Advisory Committee built in measures to minimize potential risks at the start of the project. However, part of the difficulty in minimizing these risks came from the fact that the Project Coordinator was highly visible. There is a need to apprise any future line workers of the potential risks, to allow workers an alternative if the risks are considered too great, and to provide means to protect workers.

Children involved in Satanic activities have not been identified as a special issue to be dealt with by the child and family service system in any formalized coordinated way.

OBJECTIVE #7: TO IDENTIFY SERVICE NEEDS AND GAPS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES FOR THE VICTIMS

The following are the service needs and gaps which were identified by the Youth Victims Project over the past year:

Recruitment of Children from Residential Resources

The Project Team members found that the offenders utilized fairly bold methods in recruiting children through direct contact with residential facilities. A finding early in the project was that Southeast Asian groups were recruiting girls out of Seven Oaks

Centre. Police reported that the men would drive slowly past Seven Oaks and enquire of some children whether there were any new girls in the Centre. This activity appeared to stop after police began strict surveillance of the cars and took down licence numbers.

Recruitment by children's telephone lines in residential facilities also presented a picture of the men intruding into places of safety to meet vulnerable girls. It was found that the men would speak with a number of girls during a call and ask the new girls in the facility to come to a party, thus establishing the contact. A letter was subsequently sent to all residential care facilities identifying the problem and requesting that each organization review its policies and procedures regarding the use of phone lines by children to ensure safeguards against negative contacts.

Holding on to the Child Victims

The girls continually run from some placements back to the offenders, thus making any type of treatment extremely difficult. The police found this "revolving door" situation particularly difficult in terms of gaining the disclosure details necessary to proceed with any charges against the offenders. The police found that when they located and apprehended the child again, she would be reluctant to disclose further because of either fear or a loyalty to the men involved.

Role of Residential Care Staff

The staff of residential care facilities can play a significant role in providing protection to child victims and potential victims. The girls involved in the project provided a proposal for the expectations which they would like to see enforced in group homes. These include curfews; requirements to assume responsibilities for school and house work; education in a number of areas such as sex, alcohol and drugs; assistance in enhancing communication and self-image; and planned activities.

OBSERVATIONS:

Some residential care operators believe that children must be allowed the freedom to use the telephone without calls being screened. This position has not been challenged by placing agency social workers and hence may continue to be a source of recruitment by the offenders.

Factors contributing to issues relative to children being AWOL from residential care facilities include: available staffing levels; treatment philosophy; staff training; and service provision.

It is the belief of the Advisory Committee that staff of residential care facilities have to assume more of a parental role, rather than trying to be "friends" to the children.

OBJECTIVE #8: TO DEVELOP A PROFILE OF OFFENDERS IDENTIFIED DURING THE PROJECT

During the project, police identified 75-100 male offenders. The general profile of the males that evolved showed that 90 to 95 percent were of Southeast Asian background (i.e. Vietnamese, Laotian and Filipino), ranging in age from 18 to 40 years. Information also came forward that the girls were being victimized by males identified as El Salvadorean, Chilean, East Indian, Native and Caucasian. In addition, there was an increase in the number of disclosures made by the child victims of involvement in Satanic activities.

Many of the offenders were recent immigrants to Canada, having arrived within the past one to five years. The men reported to police that they were generally employed at low paying or part-time jobs, and those who were unemployed collected social assistance or unemployment benefits. While most of the men identified were unmarried, some had wives and children. The offenders were found to live a very communal lifestyle. It was not uncommon to find six to eight men living together in a single residence and to associate in groups. There was evidence to suggest that some groups are organized as gangs with links to similar gangs in other Canadian cities (e.g. Toronto or Vancouver).

The identification of the offenders was problematic at the start of the project as they would consistently use false names and birthdates. This difficulty was alleviated because the same Youth Division officers were involved, and they became familiar with the men.

Generally the offenders were cooperative when police entered their residences to search for girls reported as missing, although they consistently placed the responsibility on the girls for being in their homes. The men maintained their innocence and said they were being harassed by the team. They did not admit to touching the girls. It is not known how they perceived the girls or their own sexual conduct.

OBSERVATIONS:

The police involved in the Youth Victims Project are officers with Youth Division and, as such, have a mandate to focus on the criminal aspect of the exploitation of the children by the males identified. The officers maintained a close working relationship with other investigative bodies, especially the Asian Crime Unit from Vice Division. Through their intensive involvement in the Youth Victims Project, these officers obtained information

related to other criminal activities of these males. While it was not an explicit goal of the Project, the officers gathered reliable information which proved useful. (It must be noted that this information is confidential to the police and is not shared with others involved in the Project).

The profile of the offenders which emerged from the Project illustrated that the majority of the men involved were from specific cultural groups and are recent immigrants to Canada. More specific information is required on their backgrounds, for example, immigration status (refugee, family class), length of time in Canada, whether some come from a refugee camp culture, etc. There is a recognized need to understand the cultural influences at work, with the hope that the future focus with offenders may be prevention rather than criminal justice. There is a need to understand how the men perceive the girls and their exploitation of these young girls.

As almost all of the female victims involved were willing participants in this exploitation, police action in their traditional re-active role was very limited due to the lack of specific legislation. These young victims would seldom disclose or co-operate with any police investigation.

There is no question from a Moral or Social point of view that the exploited female is the real victim, but from a Criminal or Legal viewpoint unless this female makes a formal disclosure, she cannot be a complainant in a criminal charge. The parent or guardian under this exploitation scenario are also victims, and under certain circumstances become the complainant for an offence, ie.,

Under Sect. 52 of the Family Services Act (Interfering with a Child in Care).

Under Sect. 280 of the Criminal Code (Abduction of a child under 16).

Under Sect. 281 of the Criminal Code (Abduction of a child under 14 yrs).

Any process under the Child and Family Services Act being a Provincial Statute must be by way of summary conviction. Because the males involved live a communal life style and if employed hold only temporary menial jobs, they are difficult to both locate and identify at any later time. There is no deterrent value as the penalty is a minor fine.

Emphasis was placed on the use of the Abductions Sections in the Criminal Code in conjunction with the serving of a "NO CONTACT FORM" for first offenders. Its intent was to serve notice on the offenders that if their actions continued, court action would ensue, and then to limit their defence options. It was also

hoped the form would act as a strong deterrent but this did not materialize.

Three males were formally charged under the Abduction sections of the Code for repeat violations of interfering with or harbouring a child. The result was one guilty plea, one stay of proceedings involving a child under 14, and on March 15, 1990 a dismissal of charges in Provincial Judges Court concerning a 15 year old victim who had run away from a group home and had later attended at the Accused's residence of her own accord. The presiding judge ruled that to merely harbour a child did not constitute an offence under this section. To sustain a conviction the Accused must either take or assist the child in leaving the care and control of the parent or guardian.

Both civil and criminal law place a legal duty on parents and guardians to both protect and provide necessary care for their children. Existing legislation does little to support the parents or guardian of a child over thirteen to exercise this duty to combat the type of exploitation occurring.

If legislation similar to the former offence of "Contributing to the Delinquency of a Child" under the old Juvenile Delinquents Act existed, police could have used all of its resources in a more positive, re-active manner to deal with offenders for this type of exploitation.

OBJECTIVE #9: TO IDENTIFY ANY TRENDS OR ISSUES WHICH AROSE DURING THE PILOT PROJECT

Response to the Media

Early media reports on the project, particularly in the print media, focused attention on the male offenders and the fact that they were identified as being part of the Southeast Asian and/or immigrant community. A communication strategy was developed whereby all requests for interviews were referred to the Executive Director of Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg. The strategy included direction on how to handle sensitive questions posed by the media. In addition, a Fact Sheet on the project was prepared for distribution as needed.

Liaison with the Ethno-Cultural Community

As the profile of the offenders developed, the Advisory Committee recognized the need to gain a better understanding of the cultural issues involved. Staff from the Immigration and Settlement Services Branch were invited to sit on the Advisory Committee. Further discussions followed regarding the need to have individuals on the Advisory Committee who were representative of the ethno-cultural community, to provide a link with the project and to encourage participation in addressing the issues of child victimization.

The issue of ethno-cultural community representation on the Advisory Committee, however, was never resolved in a satisfactory manner due to disagreements among committee members on the appropriate method for handling this type of involvement. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the ethno-cultural community would be consulted as needed through contact with an umbrella group such as the Inter-Agency Group on Immigrant Concerns.

OBJECTIVE #10: TO DETERMINE IF THE MODEL OF INTERVENTION USED IN THE YOUTH VICTIMS PROJECT IS TRANSFERABLE TO OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

The model of intervention upon which the project was developed involved having the Project Team (i.e. coordinator and two police constables) available to follow-up on potential leads to identify both the victims and the offenders which were the target of the project. The approach of the project to the child victims was to encompass trust, acceptance, and the belief in the children's inherent goodness while seeing beyond their negative behavior and experiences. The philosophy employed is based on the belief that children respond to non-judgmental, unconditional acceptance while expecting adults to set out boundaries and controls.

The Project Team model has been an effective approach in terms of identifying both the victims and the offenders. In addition to identifying and interviewing 183 victims, the team was able to locate 64 missing girls.

The police found that a consistent manner in dealing with individuals, by having a select trained group of officers is essential to success. This is due to the language and cultural barriers encountered in dealing with the target community. The offenders would frequently use nicknames or aliases and consistent contact by the same officers allowed the officers to properly identify the males involved. The team approach was found to be effective in terms of obtaining disclosures which led to 21 charges of sexual and physical abuse being laid against the men involved. In addition, the police processed another 23 offences, ranging from abduction to liquor offences.

It was also found that the close involvement of the police officers had a positive effect on the girls. The police provided the girls with a positive picture of men in general and the police in particular. The girls were able to see the police officers as men who could be trusted to protect them and to act in their best interest, without exploiting them.

OBSERVATIONS:

It was the intent of the project that the coordinator would identify the child victims and refer them to appropriate agencies for follow-up services and counselling. In reality, the victims rarely received the necessary follow-up services and were subsequently at risk for re-involvement with the offenders. Some agencies expected or relied on the project coordinator to provide the one-to-one counselling.

An issue which was raised by the Advisory Committee at the beginning of the project was whether the project's success in identifying and profiling the involved child victims would be based on the coordinator's personal style, and if so, whether this approach is identifiable and transferable. The philosophy upon which the project was based is used by other workers in the child protection system and is transferable. However, the coordinator over the past year developed a wealth of specialized knowledge and experience in the area of victimization by organized gangs. What may be required, therefore, is additional support and training for workers.

Child victimization by organized gangs of third party offenders is not a new phenomena, but the types of gangs and their particular styles or methods of victimization are specific. Child protection workers are already knowledgeable about the vulnerability of the victims, but they require training to understand the manipulative methods used by the offender groups in order to recognize the information provided in disclosures and to combat these influences. Because the gangs are organized and the victims are often involved with more than one type of gang, there needs to be an organized network for the exchange of information between workers and the police.

It was found that the police department can interchange the officers assigned to target the offender group, as long as the level of training has been provided to enable the officers to readily identify offenders and to deal with the cultural considerations.

OBJECTIVE #11: TO IDENTIFY THE EXTENT OF THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION REGARDING YOUTH VICTIMIZATION

During the course of the project, the Project Team gave 43 presentations to schools, residential resources, child and family service agencies and collateral service providers. Survey forms sent to agencies who had hosted a presentation showed that approximately 895 individuals attended presentations hosted by 18 of these groups.

Requests have increasingly been made by teachers and school counsellors for presentation to students, in an effort to educate the children on the potential risk of victimization. The

Manitoba Foster Family Association has also requested presentations for groups of foster families.

The media, including radio and television, has recently shown an interest in presenting educational information on the topic of youth victimization by organized gangs in a responsible, educational tone, as compared with the more "sensational" reporting that appeared early in the project.

OBSERVATIONS:

The experience of the project has demonstrated that there is a growing interest in learning more about the issue of child victimization by organized gangs. The demand for presentations illustrates that this topic is quite specific and requires a specialized level of knowledge.

The focus of the educational activities during the year was largely to professionals regarding identifying child victims and understanding their vulnerability to this specific type of exploitation. There is also a need for a more concerted effort to address community education from a broader base which would include parents, community organizations, ethno-cultural communities and neighborhood groups.

V. SURVEY RESULTS

Two survey questionnaires, one for those who had hosted a presentation, and another for direct service providers, were distributed to obtain comments from individuals who had direct contact with the project. Copies of the questionnaires are included in Appendix A.

Twenty-three surveys were completed (of a total of 29) of those who had hosted a presentation for their agency, school or other audience. In terms of awareness of the project, respondents reported that they learned of the project directly from the coordinator (5), school counsellors (5), Child Guidance Clinic social workers (2), other agency social workers (3), victims/other youth (5), newsletter (1), public health (1), Residential Advisory Committee (1). Respondents stated that they had become interested in hosting a presentation because they were aware of victims/offenders (11) or because they wished to increase their knowledge (7). Generally the respondents clearly identified that the presentations were very helpful. Some interest was identified on the need for further presentations on the topic, and most respondents identified the value of the project. Appendix B provides further results from this questionnaire.

The direct service provider questionnaire was completed by 19 of 35 possible respondents. The purpose of this survey was to learn about the workers' knowledge of this type of youth victimization

prior to and after involvement with the project and to obtain comments on the effectiveness of the project at the level of working with victims. The type of agency where the respondents worked included child and family services (7), school related (4), and residential care (8). Twelve respondents had knowledge of such victimization prior to May 1989 and one respondent had heard rumors. Respondents stated that some of the benefits of the presentation were that they are better able to interview victims and have a better understanding of the victims. As well they reported an increased awareness of the project and noted that parental involvement is now encouraged.

All 19 respondents indicated that the project was of value to them in their direct work with children/victims. The value of having a central contact person was also noted. Ten respondents identified the project as being an effective approach to dealing with child victimization, while five respondents felt that the project was only a starting point for dealing with this problem. Suggested enhancements identified included: continuation of the project; closer links with the school divisions; more education; and increased resources and staff. The results of this survey indicate that the project has been helpful in dealing more effectively with victims and in providing a central coordination for information. Appendix C provides further results from this questionnaire.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Project's Advisory Committee continue to meet for up to six months in order to implement the committee's recommendations.
2. Because the majority of youth identified in the project are from its area, and because of its experience in child exploitation, that Child and Family Services of Central Winnipeg be asked to maintain a position to provide consultation and leadership regarding Youth Victim services.
3. That the Project's Advisory Committee members facilitate information sharing sessions with relevant representatives from Agencies and Project's involved with the victims, e.g., within Health, Education, Parks and Recreation. To provide updated information on the nature and extent of the problem and the need for co-ordination among service Agencies.
4. That the Advisory Committee approach the Inter-agency Group to host a circle on child exploitation and that the Advisory Committee approach key people from different disciplines to form the nucleus of such a circle whose role would be to make recommendations regarding the service and information needs pertaining to child exploitation.

5. That a strong presentation be made to both the Federal and Provincial Justice Departments for effective legislation designed to deal with the exploitation of children under 18 years of age.
 - The legislation must provide positive intervention by police and result in immediate court action and appearance in court. The penalties must be substantive to act as a deterrent.
6. That the Police and Immigration and Settlement Services co-operate with respect to information sharing to facilitate the development of an offender profile for the purposes of prevention and intervention program development by Immigration and Settlement Services and the development of appropriate deterrents by the police.
7. That the Child and Family Support Branch take the lead in convening a meeting of mandated agencies to address the issue of the nature and extent of the child victim problem and the continuum of resources available to address this problem.
 - This should include the children vulnerable to pornographers, pimps and cults, as well as the victim group that was identified in this study as vulnerable to groups of young immigrant males.
8. That Child and Family Support review the mandate, role, membership and information sharing strategy of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Child Abuse, the Protection Council, and the Resource Council to ensure that these committees are able to adequately identify issues, recommend options/alternatives and co-ordinate information relevant to protection/abuse, treatment and service delivery for children in care.
9. That Child and Family Service agencies ensure that Section 19 of The Child and Family Services Act, specifically sections relating to the sharing of information on all cases involving alleged abuse with the Agency Child Abuse Committee, is adhered to.
10. That the Child and Family Support Directorate, in consultation with the existing Resource Council, continue to provide direction regarding treatment approaches for children in residential resources, including foster, group, and institutional resources.
11. That the quality and quantity of the continuum of alternative living resources be enhanced to better meet the needs of victimized youth.